



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

March 7, 2024

The Honorable C. T. Wilson
Chair, House Economic Matters Committee
Room 231, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: House Bill 1283 - Insurance - Discrimination - Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity

Dear Delegate Wilson and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department), supports House Bill (HB) 1283. This proposed legislation is essential for further securing nondiscrimination protections in health insurance coverage and health care for LGBTQ+ communities. Ensuring that LGBTQ+ residents have access to healthcare reflects the values of the Moore/Miller Administration.

HB 1283 supports the Department's mission of addressing social determinants of health, reducing health disparities, and advancing health equity among Maryland residents. Within the state LGBTQ+ people have an 8% rate of uninsurance while non-LGBTQ+ people have an uninsurance rate of 5%.¹ Historically, black and brown LGBTQ+ people are more likely to face barriers to healthcare than their straight and cisgender counterparts and LGBTQ+ individuals have faced barriers when navigating health insurance. Some of these historic barriers include gaps in coverage for certain groups, cost-related hurdles, and stigma, including poor treatment from health care providers.² HB 1283 works toward strengthening protections for LGBTQ+ Marylanders, preventing barriers to access.

If you would like to discuss this further, please do not hesitate to contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director of Governmental Affairs at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov or (410) 260-3190.

Sincerely,

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

¹ (2022) We can do more to support Maryland's 500,000+ LGBTQ+ residents. In: Maryland Center on Economic Policy. Accessed 4 Mar 2024

² Jennifer Kates UR (2018) Health and access to care and coverage for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals in the U.S. In: KFF. Accessed 4 Mar 2024